

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated December 15, 2005, claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by UK Patent 1346246 (UK246).

Applicant amends the claims to more particularly point out the present invention and distinguish it from UK246. Specifically, applicant amends claims 1 and 10 to require that the fibrous support include fibers that are made from glass, carbon or ceramic.

It is important to note that UK 246 is directed to flame proofing readily combustible textile fibers which is completely different from the present invention, as now claimed, wherein the fibers are made from non-combustible materials (i.e. glass, carbon or ceramic). There is a significant difference between flame proofing readily combustible fibers, as is the case with UK 246, and the present invention where the fire resistance of a resin matrix, and not the fibers, is being increased.

In discussing the use of red phosphorous as a fireproofing agent, UK 246 states:

“It has further been proposed to make polyurethane foam materials flame-proof by adding red phosphorus. However, this is not in connection with the treatment of textiles. Treated textiles cannot be compared with such substances as synthetic resins are only present in limited quantities therein, most of the substances being formed by the readily combustible textile portion.”

(Page 1, col. 1, lines 26 – 34) (emphasis added).

UK 246 further makes it clear that its teachings are limited only to readily combustible textile fibers by stating that:

“The textiles can be of different types e.g. natural fibres such as wool, cotton, hard fibres such as sisal or hemp, man-made fibres such as regenerated cellulose and its derivatives, e.g. rayon, polyamides, polyesters and optionally also mixtures of these fibres can all be used.”

(Page 2, col. 1, lines 34 – 39).

There is a significant difference between the problems associated with flame proofing readily combustible fibers, such as cotton and wool, as taught by UK246 and the treatment of matrix resins in composite materials to increase the resistance of the resin matrix (and not the non-combustible glass, carbon or ceramic fibers) to fire. In addition, there is no teaching or suggestion in UK 246 that its disclosure with respect to flame proofing cotton, wool and the like has any relevancy or comparison to increasing the fire resistance of a matrix resin where the fibers are non-combustible glass, carbon or ceramic.

To the contrary, as set forth in the first quotation above, UK 246 teaches that there is no comparison between the flame proofing of combustible textiles (which have synthetic resins present only in limited amounts) and other materials that contain substantial amounts of synthetic resins. Accordingly, the present invention, as now claimed, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by UK246.

The claims were also rejected as being indefinite since thermoplastic polymers with a glass transition temperature of lower than 300°C were included as an optional element. Applicant has amended the claims to remove this indefiniteness.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, applicant respectfully requests that this application be reexamined and that the claims, as amended, be allowed.

Applicant also encloses herewith a request for a 2-month Extension of Time in order to extend the due date for this response until May 15, 2005.

Please charge any deficiency in the enclosed fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1811.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 29, 2005

/David J. Oldenkamp/

David J. Oldenkamp, Reg. #29,421
SHAPIRO & DUPONT LLP
233 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 700
Santa Monica, California 90401
(310) 319-5411 (Telephone)
(310) 319-5401 (Facsimile)